

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 1153

By Mr. Toomey of Cambridge, petition of Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., and others for legislation to establish a grant program within the Department of Education to assist economically disadvantaged youth. Education.

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

### PETITION OF:

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In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

### AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE MASSACHUSETTS YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

- 1 Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting
- 2 after section 89, the following sections:—
- 3 Section 90. There is hereby established a grant program for
- 4 YouthBuild. Said program shall be administered by the depart-
- 5 ment pursuant to these sections.
- 6 The purpose of the YouthBuild Programs shall be:

7 (a) to enable economically disadvantaged youth, especially  
8 youth who have not finished high school, to obtain the education,  
9 job skills training, personal counseling, leadership development  
10 skills training, job placement assistance, and long-term follow-up  
11 leading to economic self sufficiency.

12 (b) to provide communities the opportunity to establish or  
13 rebuild neighborhood stability in economically depressed and  
14 low-income areas, as well as historic areas requiring restoration or  
15 preservation, while providing economically disadvantaged youth  
16 and youth who have not finished high school an opportunity for  
17 meaningful participation in society.

18 (c) to allow communities to maintain and expand the supply of  
19 affordable housing for homeless and other low-income individuals  
20 by utilizing the energies and talents of economically disadvan-  
21 taged youth and young people who have not graduated from high  
22 school.

23 (d) to foster the development of leadership skills and a commit-  
24 ment to community development among youth.

25 Section 91. Definitions. In this Act:

26 “Applicant” means a public or private not-for-profit agency eli-  
27 gible to provide education and employment training under federal  
28 or State employment training programs.

29 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Department of  
30 Education.

31 “YouthBuild” is a program that provides disadvantaged youth  
32 with opportunities for comprehensive education, employment,  
33 leadership development, and training in the construction or reha-  
34 bilitation of housing for special needs populations, very low-  
35 income households and low-income households.

36 Section 92. Program requirements.

37 The Commissioner is authorized to make grants to applicants  
38 for the purpose of providing YouthBuild programs as approved  
39 under this Section. All programs funded pursuant to the provisions  
40 of this Section shall reflect strong youth and community involve-  
41 ment. In addition, funding provided under this Section shall be  
42 used by each YouthBuild program to provide, at a minimum, the  
43 following services:

44 (a) Integrated education and job skills training services and  
45 activities which are evenly divided within the program, with 50%

46 of students' time spent in classroom-based instruction, counseling,  
47 and leadership development instruction and 50% of their time  
48 spent in service learning experiences at construction sites. The  
49 programs shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:

50 (1) An education component which includes basic skills  
51 instruction, secondary education services, and other activities  
52 designed to lead to the attainment of a high school diploma or its  
53 equivalent. The curriculum for this component shall include math,  
54 language arts, vocational education, life skills training, social  
55 studies related to the cultural and community history of the stu-  
56 dents, leadership skills, and other topics at the discretion of the  
57 programs.

58 (2) A vocational learning experience and skills training compo-  
59 nent apprenticeship program that includes the construction and  
60 rehabilitation activities described in subsection (e). The process of  
61 construction must be coupled with skills training and with close  
62 on-site supervision by experienced trainers. The curriculum for  
63 this component shall contain a set of locally agreed upon skills  
64 and competencies that are systematically taught, with a student's  
65 mastery assessed individually on a regular, ongoing basis. Safety  
66 skills shall be taught at the outset. The vocational learning experi-  
67 ence and skills training component shall be coordinated to the  
68 maximum extent feasible with pre-apprenticeship and apprentice-  
69 ship programs.

70 (3) Assistance in attaining post secondary education and  
71 required financial aid shall be made available to participants prior  
72 to graduation.

73 (b) Counseling services designed to assist participants to posi-  
74 tively participate in society, which should include all of the  
75 following if necessary: outreach, assessment, and orientation;  
76 individual and peer counseling; life skills training, drug and  
77 alcohol abuse education and prevention; and referral to appro-  
78 priate drug rehabilitation, medical, mental health, legal, housing,  
79 and other services and resources in the community.

80 (c) Leadership development training that provides participants  
81 with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills such as  
82 decision making, problem solving, and negotiating. The program  
83 must also encourage participants to develop strong peer group ties  
84 that support their mutual pursuit of skills and values. All programs

85 must establish a youth council in which participants are afforded  
86 opportunities to develop public speaking and negotiating skills,  
87 and management and policy making participation in specific  
88 aspects of the program.

89 (d) Assist with the acquisition, rehabilitation, acquisition and  
90 rehabilitation, or construction of housing and related facilities  
91 which will serve as the vocational training sites and then to be  
92 used for the purpose of providing home ownership for disadvan-  
93 tagged persons, residential housing for homeless individuals, and  
94 low-income and very low-income families, or transitional housing  
95 for persons who are homeless, have disabilities, are ill, are de-  
96 institutionalized, or have special needs, and rehabilitation or con-  
97 struction of community facilities owned by not-for-profit or public  
98 agencies.

99 (e) A stipend must be provided to participants to cover the costs  
100 associated with their full time participation in this program. This  
101 stipend shall not be considered as income in determining eligi-  
102 bility for other state or federal assistance programs.

103 (f) Stipends may be distributed in a manner that offers incen-  
104 tives for good performance.

105 (g) Full time participation in a YouthBuild program shall be  
106 offered for a period of not less than 6 months and not more than  
107 24 months.

108 (h) A concentrated effort shall be made to find jobs for all grad-  
109 uates of the program who have performed well. The skills training  
110 curriculum shall provide participants with basic preparation for  
111 seeking and maintaining a job. Follow-up counseling and assis-  
112 tance in job-seeking shall also be provided to participants for the  
113 12 months following graduation from the program.

114 (i) All programs serving 20 trainees or more are required to  
115 have a full-time director responsible for the coordination of all  
116 aspects of the YouthBuild program.

117 Section 93. Eligible participants.

118 Eligible participants are youth 16 to 24 years and who are part  
119 of one of the following groups:

120 (a) economically disadvantaged.

121 (b) persons who are not attending any school and have not  
122 received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.

123 (c) young people involved with other state agencies, including  
124 but not limited to, the departments of social services, youth serv-  
125 ices and the court system.

126 Section 94. Eligible Entities and Selection Criteria.

127 Those eligible to be awarded funds under this act are not-for-  
128 profit private agencies with experience operating a YouthBuild  
129 program or entities that have received a federal Housing and  
130 Urban Development YouthBuild grant or have experience in  
131 serving this population and have plans to incubate a YouthBuild  
132 program. Priority in the awarding of funds under this act shall be  
133 given to applicants with experience in operating YouthBuild pro-  
134 grams or organizations that have received federal HUD Youth-  
135 Build funding. Only not for profit private agencies that are  
136 affiliates of YouthBuild USA or have received a federal Housing  
137 and Urban Development YouthBuild award are eligible to use the  
138 term YouthBuild.

139 Section 95. Application requirements.

140 The Commissioner shall require that an application for Youth-  
141 Build funds under this act contain at a minimum:

142 (1) a request for an implementation grant, specifying the  
143 amount of the grant requested and its proposed uses;

144 (2) a description of the applicant and a statement of its qualifi-  
145 cations, including a description of the applicant's past experience  
146 running a YouthBuild program, and with housing rehabilitation or  
147 construction and with youth and youth education, youth leadership  
148 development and employment training programs and other rele-  
149 vant community organizations;

150 (3) a description of the educational and job training activities,  
151 work opportunities, and other services that will be provided to  
152 participants;

153 (4) a description of the proposed construction or rehabilitation  
154 activities to be undertaken and the anticipated schedule for car-  
155 rying out such activities;

156 (5) a description of the manner in which eligible youths will be  
157 recruited and selected, including a description of the arrangements  
158 which will be made with community-based organizations, local  
159 educational agencies, public assistance agencies, the courts of  
160 jurisdiction for status and youth offenders, shelters for homeless

161 individuals and other agencies that serve homeless youth, foster  
162 care agencies, and other appropriate public and private agencies;

163 (6) a description of the special efforts that will be undertaken to  
164 recruit eligible young women (including young women with  
165 dependent children) with plans for addressing appropriate sup-  
166 ports they may need, especially childcare;

167 (7) a description of how the proposed program will be coordi-  
168 nated with other youth serving agencies in the service area;

169 (8) assurances that there will be a sufficient number of ade-  
170 quately trained supervisory personnel in the program who have  
171 attained the level of journeyman or its equivalent;

172 (9) a description of the applicant's relationship with any local  
173 building trade unions which may exist, regarding their involve-  
174 ment in training, and the relationship of the YouthBuild program  
175 with established apprenticeship programs;

176 (10) a description of activities that will be undertaken to  
177 develop the leadership skills of participants, including their role in  
178 decision making;

179 (11) a detailed budget and a description of the system of fiscal  
180 controls and auditing and accountability procedures that will be  
181 used to ensure fiscal soundness;

182 (12) a description of any contracts and arrangements entered  
183 into between the applicant and other agencies and entities  
184 including all in-kind donations and grants from both public and  
185 private entities that will serve to augment state YouthBuild funds;

186 (13) the qualifications and past experience of the person who  
187 will fill the full-time program director position.

188 (14) other information/factors as deemed necessary by the  
189 Commissioner.

190 Section 97. Outcomes and evaluation.

191 Subsection (a) An applicant selected for funding under this act  
192 shall provide to the department information on program and par-  
193 ticipant accomplishments, including but not limited to: atten-  
194 dance, retention, GED attainment, high school diplomas issued,  
195 educational improvement levels, placement, construction out-  
196 comes and community service accomplishments.

197 Subsection (b) The department shall prepare an initial evalua-  
198 tion report which shall be made available to the Governor and  
199 appropriate legislative committees on the progress of individual

200 programs funded under this act. A final evaluation report shall be  
201 prepared on individual programs at the times of their completion.  
202 The final evaluation report shall include, but not be limited to,  
203 information on the effectiveness of the program, the status of pro-  
204 gram participants and recommendations on program administra-  
205 tion at the state and local level.